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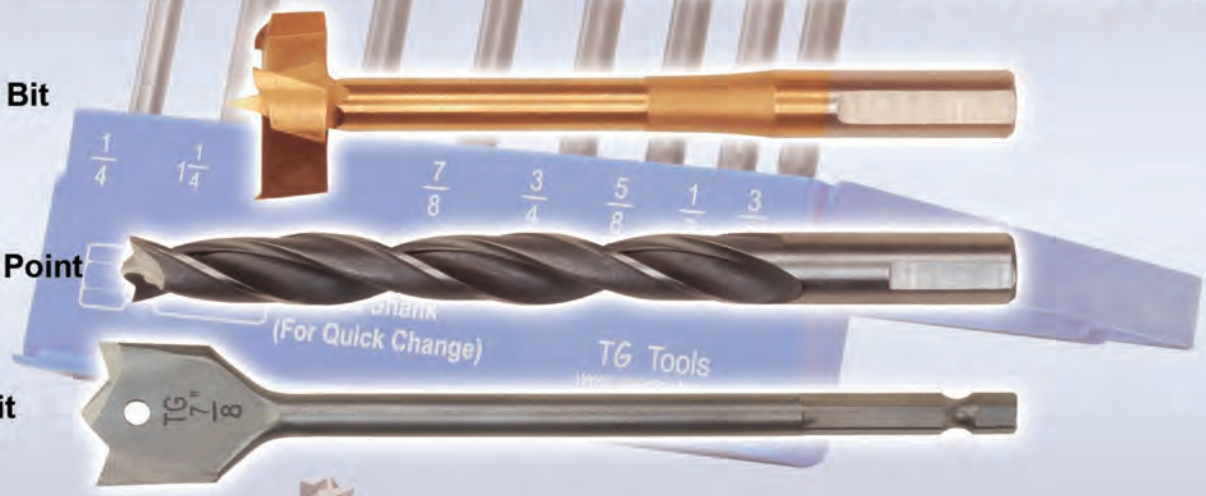

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DATE	RACE	TRACK - LOCATION
Saturday, April 4th	O'Reilly 300	Texas Motor Speedway - Fort Worth, TX
Friday, May 1st	Lipton Tea 250	Richmond International Raceway - Richmond, VA
Saturday, May 23rd	Carquest Auto Parts 300	Lowe's Motor Speedway - Charlotte, NC
Saturday, May 30th	Heluva Good! 200	Dover International Speedway - Dover, DE
Saturday, June 20th	Camping World RV Rentals 250	The Milwaukee - Milwaukee, WI
Saturday, July 25th	Kroger 200	O'Reilly Raceway Park - Indianapolis, IN
Saturday, August 1st	TBA	Iowa Speedway - Newton, IA
Friday, August 21st	Food City 250	Bristol Motor Speedway - Bristol, TN
Saturday, September 5th	Degree V12 300	Atlanta Motor Speedway - Atlanta, GA
Saturday, October 3rd	Kansas Lottery 300	Kansas Speedway - Kansas City, KS

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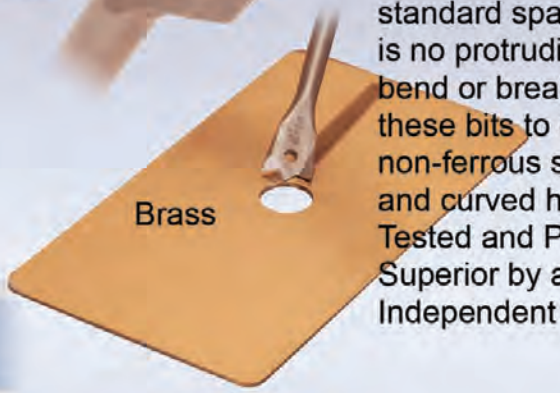

Brass

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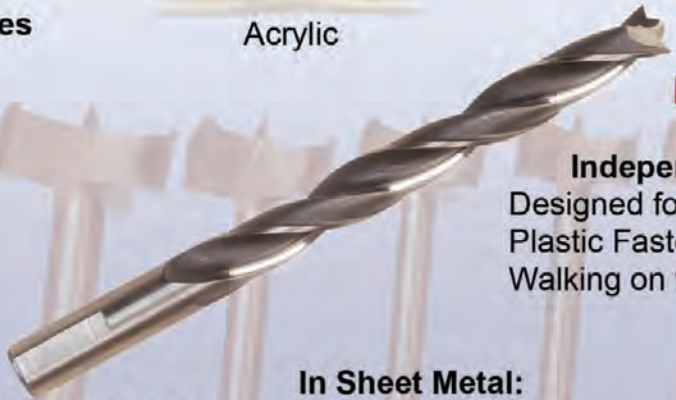

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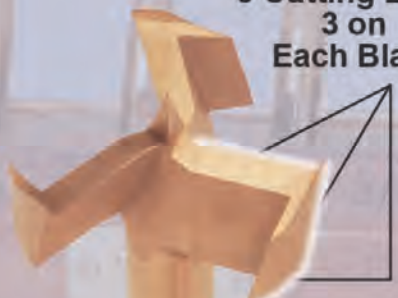

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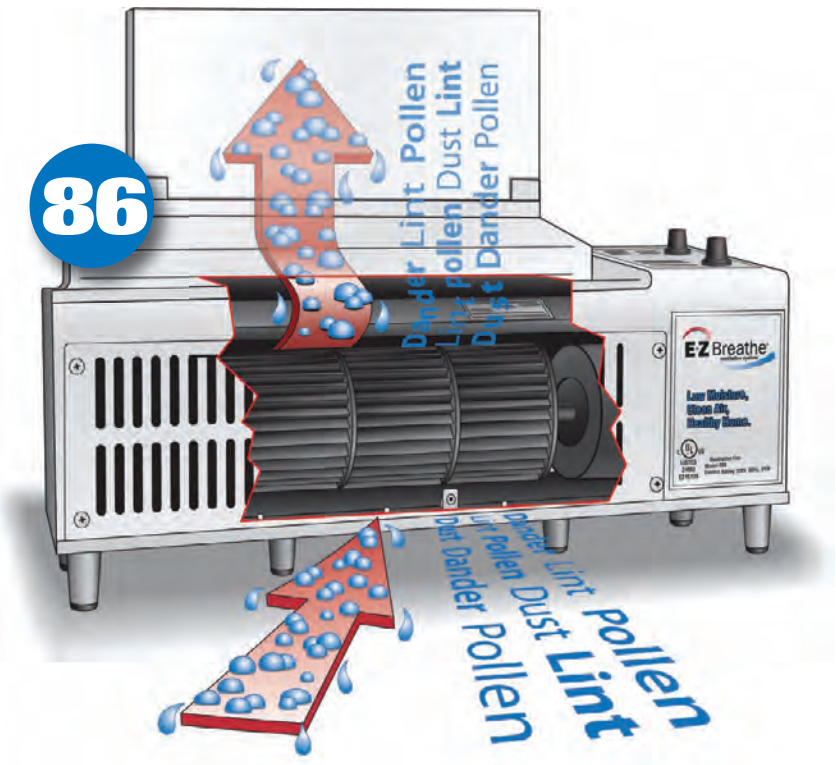

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LETTER *From The Editor-In-Chief*

"A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore." That's a quote from baseball great, Yogi Berra, and it sums up the way a lot of us feel about the economy—dispirited and a little confused. And, personally speaking, it doesn't bolster my confidence that the federal government is throwing around billions in tax dollars like cheap beads at Mardi Gras.

For most of us, saving money has never seemed like a better idea, and in response the home-improvement industry is concentrating on energy savings in and around the home. Although the "green" initiative in building and remodeling is rooted in the environmental conservation movement, in light of the current recession, that particular shade of green has taken the more commercial hue of legal tender. When banks start failing, stocks plummet and the nation hits the highest rate of unemployment in decades, even a litterbug can see the appeal of a lower energy bill.

In this issue, we offer a glance at just a few of the many new energy-saving home products available to the cost-conscious consumer. From advances in light bulbs to cutting-edge appliances, these products serve as only a glimpse of the technology yet to come.

But you don't have to upgrade an appliance to start saving energy. Consider calling a professional energy auditor; these companies use infrared cameras to spot areas of energy loss in your home. Add insulation to cut heating and cooling bills. Insulate and seal all cracks and gaps in the ductwork, and make sure windows and doors are sealed with weather-stripping. Even some simple decorative items can help. Throw rugs used over hardwood floors can help lock warmth into the home, and curtains can help reduce heat loss through windows.

In times like these, every penny counts and by conserving energy, you not only keep more money in your wallet but also lessen your impact on the environment. For more energy saving advice, including tips on how to conduct your own Home Energy Audit, visit www.extremehowto.com.

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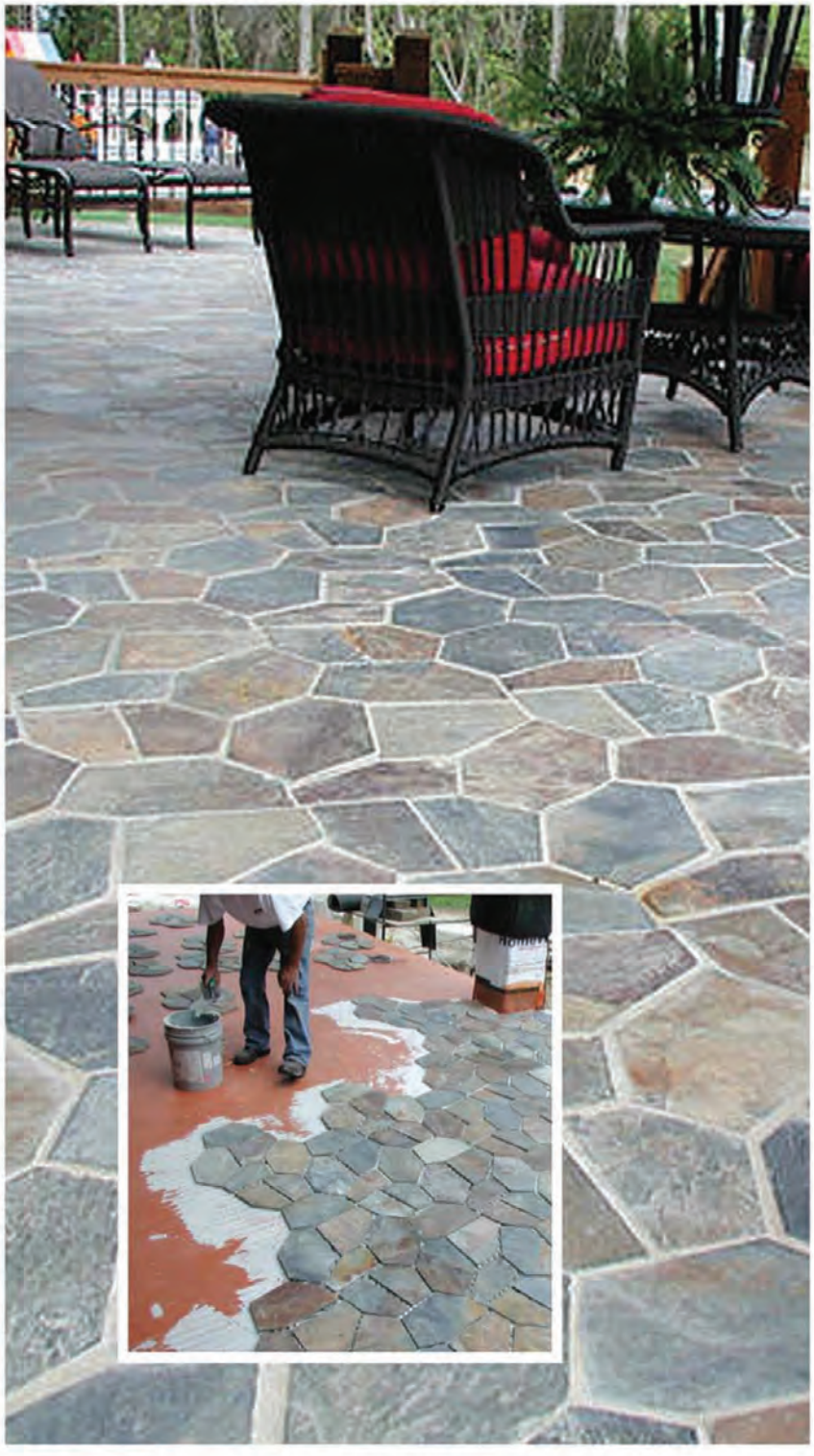

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Q: *Can I paint asphalt roof shingles?*

A: It is possible to paint asphalt shingles, but many professionals recommend against it. The roof is directly exposed to the elements, so it is much more prone to damage than the rest of the house. Furthermore, asphalt shingles consist of granules that detach over time, which can lead to blotchy areas on the painted surface. So, if you decide to paint your shingles, then you'll have to periodically maintain it with a fresh coat. To do the job you'll need a high-quality, 100-percent acrylic latex paint with a flat finish. Behr manufactures a specially formulated roof paint that is resistant to mildew and algae, and resists yellowing when exposed to typical high roof temperatures. Behr Roof Paint is intended to brighten roofs and reflect heat, however the *EHT* staff has no first-hand experience with the product. Before painting, replace any brittle or cracked shingles and clean the roof surface. Prime the roof with a coat of water-based primer and sealer. Then, starting at the top of the roof, use a high quality 1-inch nap roller, nylon/polyester brush or airless sprayer to apply two coats of roof paint, allowing time to dry between each.

Q: *What is the best way to paint metal baseboard heater covers?*

A: First, thoroughly clean the surface and sand away any rust. For iron or steel, Rust-Oleum manufactures some premium metal spray paints and primers. Otherwise, you'll get the best results using an oil-based primer and an oil-based top coat. Latex paints are permeable to humidity, which could allow moisture to penetrate down to the metal and allow rust to develop. Brushing will work, but spraying will achieve the most even coverage and eliminate bristle marks.

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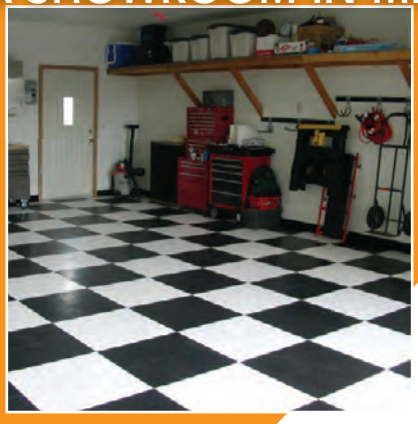

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Q: *What types of wood are best suited for firewood?*

A: There are significant differences in the burning qualities of various types of wood. Burning most air-dried woods produces roughly 7,000 British thermal units of heat per pound. Heavier, denser wood provides more heat per cord. Look for "seasoned firewood," which has been left out to dry for an extended period of time. Wet wood, such as green wood that was recently cut from a tree, is more difficult to burn and generates less heat. Most of the firewood you select should be hardwoods, which are generally heavier and burn slower and cleaner than softwoods. For the highest, most intense heat, some good hardwood selections include ash, oak, beech, birch, hickory, hard maple, pecan, dogwood, almond and apple.

Q: *How does a heat pump work?*

A: In the simplest sense, a heat pump takes heat from one place and moves it to the other, rather than burning fuel. In our homes, a heat pump system moves air from inside the house to the outside, or vice versa, to heat the home in winter and cool it in summer. Heat pumps are comprised of two units, one inside and one outside the house. These two units are governed by a reversing valve that switches the system from heating to cooling mode. When the home needs heat, refrigerant is pumped outdoors where it absorbs any available heat, converting it to a gas. The gas is then liquefied in a compressor and the resulting heat releases through the coils to be distributed by the fan and ductwork. When the home needs cooling, the reverse happens—the refrigerant absorbs heat from the house and pumps it to the coils outside the home. **EHT**

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A Variety of Finishes Adds Class and Character

Imagination, time and specialty paints will turn drab furniture, such as this old chest, into exciting and unusual décor. Shown is a crackle finish.

By Monte Burch

Imagination and a few specialty paints can turn drab, aged or even unfinished new furniture into fun and exciting décor. This includes both inside and outside furniture. A wide range of paints are available in both brush-on and spray for creating your own fantastic furniture finishes.

CRACKLE

One of the most dramatic furniture finishes is a "crackle." A crackle finish is great for revitalizing old, drab furniture pieces, but works equally well for accent pieces. A crackle finish can be applied with a spray-on or hand painted technique. Spray-on finishes are best for smaller accent pieces.

The crackle finishes manufactured by Valspar, both spray-on and paint-on, are available in two styles, Weathered Crackle and Porcelain Crackle. Weathered Crackle has large cracks or splits in the top finish; Porcelain Crackle has smaller checks, more resembling aged porcelain. Both are available in a wide range of both base and top-coat colors. Check your local Lowe's store for what's available.

Spray-on crackle finishes consist of two cans, base and top coat. Brush-on finishes consist of a base coat, Crackle Glaze and a top coat. Any latex paint can be used as both base and top coat. The effects can be dramatic. Experiment on a scrap of wood before tackling your furniture or accessory project to make sure you understand the crackle finish and the colors.

In both instances, make sure the surface is clean of all grit, oil and loose particles. For spray-on crackle, spray the base coat at room temperature, making sure the coating is applied evenly and that the surface is covered well. If the object to be covered has a previous paint coat, test spray in an inconspicuous area to make sure the paints are compatible. In most instances you should apply at least two coats of base to make sure the object is well covered. Allow the base coat to dry thoroughly, and then spray on the crackle top coat.

To create this crackle finish, a base coat of tan latex trim paint matching the color of the walls is first applied.

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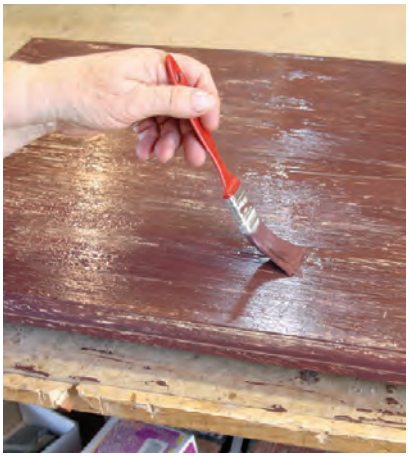
The glaze technique using brush-on or roll-on latex paint requires applying a smooth base coat of the desired color with a roller or brush, making sure the coating is smooth and evenly applied. Again, you may wish to apply more than one coat to ensure thorough coverage. Allow the last coat to dry overnight. For a Porcelain Crackle, apply an even coat to the surface using a foam brush in an X pattern, overlapping the brush strokes to cover the surface. Reload the foam brush and even out the glaze by running the brush over the surface. Add more glaze as needed and make a final smoothing with the grain of the wood. Allow the crackle glaze to dry at least 24 hours, and then apply

The crackle glaze is applied and allowed to set for 2 to 4 hours.

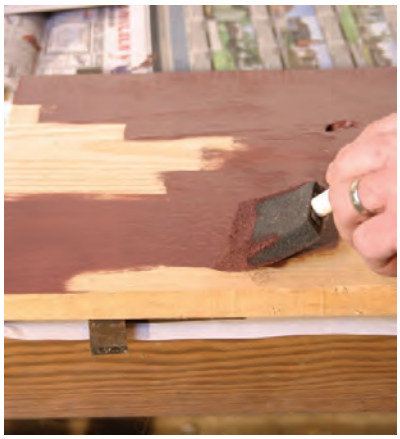
Valspar Antiquing Glaze or Translucent Color Glaze to the surface with a dry rag or brush. Remove excess glaze before it dries and then apply a coat of Valspar Clear Protector.

Weathered Crackle is applied in somewhat the same manner, first applying the base coat and allowing to dry overnight. Then apply the Weathered Crackle Glaze to the surface using a quality nylon brush or short-nap (1/4-inch) roller. For a more pronounced crackle, use the brush.



In this case a plum-colored top coat was applied. Within minutes the top coat will separate into crackles.

For a more delicate appearance, use the roller. The more Crackle Glaze applied, the more pronounced the separations. Make sure the coat is applied evenly, but do not overwork. Allow the glaze coating to dry 2 to 4 hours. Then, using a roller or brush, apply a top coat of interior flat paint. The paint must be flat sheen paint. Any other sheen will not produce an effective crackle finish. Do not overwork the top coat, as this can cause the paint to ball up.



The crackle finish can be almost any combination of contrasting colors. Shown here, plum was used as the base.

Within minutes the top coat will begin to separate into crackles, allowing the base coat to show through. Allow to dry overnight. To create an even more weathered look, rub Antiquing Glaze or Burnt Umber over the Weathered Crackle Finish. Allow to dry at least 72 hours, and then apply a

The tan color was then used over the plum as the top coat.

coat of Valspar Clear Protector. Create an even more distressed appearance by rubbing or sanding off the edges or down through the top coat to the under coat.

CREATE A RUBBED FINISH

The popular "rubbed" finish is actually not rubbed but sanded. This technique is especially

One of the most popular finishes these days is the rubbed or "distressed" look.

effective on furniture. The simplest technique is to apply several coats of a quality latex paint to the object, allow them to dry and then use fine sandpaper to lightly sand the corners and edges. As you can guess, this technique works best with furniture designs with lots of edges, such as frame and panel.

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An alternative method is to apply a base coat of one color, allow it to dry and then apply several top coats of another color. Sand down through the top coat to the base coat in selected areas. This technique is great for matching a furniture piece to room décor, using either the base or top coat as the match and the other coat as a complementary color.

A latex trim paint is applied.

Then the edges, as well as some of the flat surfaces, are lightly sanded to remove a portion of the paint.

"ANTIQUE" FINISH

The "antiqued" finish has been extremely popular for some time. This finish consists of applying a base coat, then following with an antiquing glaze. The products are often sold in kit form containing the undercoat and glaze. You can also create your own antiquing glaze by adding burnt umber oil

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colors to polyurethane varnish and use any choice of color for the undercoat. In either instance, experiment on scrap wood before attempting your furniture project. After the base coat has dried, the glaze is applied with a foam brush, and the excess glaze wiped off with a clean rag. Always apply glaze and smooth out with the direction of the wood grain. Again, furniture projects with pronounced edges and moldings produce the best effect.

One of the traditional fun finishes is "antiquing." Antiquing kits are available, and the process involves applying a base coat, then a stained glaze and wiping off the latter.

LIMED OAK

A very popular and simple furniture finish is limed oak. Actually, this has become increasingly popular as a cabinet finish as well as for house trim,

Limed oak is a very popular finish and turned this previously dark 50's desk into a great sewing and craft room work surface.

MAGNETIC PAINTBRUSH HOLDER

Simple in design but handy during a painting job, the Magnetic Paintbrush Holder from Bigg Lugg, Inc., does just what it sounds like. The *EHT* staff put the gadget to use on some recent paint projects, and it conveniently clips to the rim of a paint can so the metal ferrule of the brush can adhere to the magnets, vertically or horizontally. This helps prevent the bad habit of laying a wet brush "just any old place," where it usually collects dirt or debris and/or leaves a drippy mess. The downward angle of the brush also allows paint to flow from the bristles back into the can, making brush cleanup much easier. Plus, the clip includes a metal tab for opening paint cans. The Magnetic Paintbrush Holder sells for only $3.50 at Lee Valley Tools (www.leevalley.com).

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not only on oak but with other woods as well. The process is actually quite simple. Dilute a satin-sheen white latex paint about half with water and apply in a smooth, even coat to the cleaned wood surface using a foam brush. Allow the latex to

White latex paint mixed with water is applied to the surface.

While still wet, the paint is lightly rubbed off the surface with a soft cloth to create a smooth, streak-free finish, while leaving white in the oak grain.

sit for a few minutes, then remove the excess with a clean rag, wiping in the direction of the wood grain, but leaving plenty of color in the wood grain. Allow to dry thoroughly, and then apply a top coat of polyurethane or Valspar Clear Protector.

Polyurethane varnish is then applied over the dried surface.

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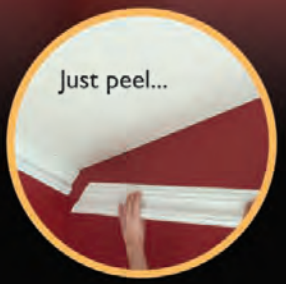

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SPRAY PAINTS

If you haven't walked down the spray-paint aisle in a big-box store for some time, you may be surprised, not only at the vast array of colors, but also the number of specialty paints as well. Some of the most interesting are the metallic colors. Gold, silver, brass, bronze, copper, pewter—you name it. The most striking are the "hammered" metallics, but other finishes also simulate "suede" and stone as well as other textures. Several of these specialty metal-style paints can be used for a quick and easy rejuvenation of metal outdoor lawn furniture and accessories.

Some of the most interesting and easy-to-use furniture finishes are today's unusual spray paints. Rust-Oleum Hammered Bronze turned a pair of green chairs and a white table into a matching set of outdoor furniture.

First step in using spray paints on outdoor furniture is to remove any rust and loose particles, then clean the surface thoroughly.

Apply the spray evenly in several coats, keeping the nozzle about 12 inches from the surface and keeping the can moving to prevent runs.

It's important to choose a long-lasting spray paint designed for outdoor use on metal, such as Rust-Oleum. Although this can actually be applied directly over rust, it's important to first loosen scale and remove loose paint and rust flakes with a wire brush and/or sandpaper. Then clean the surface with soap and water to remove grease and oils, and allow the surface to dry thoroughly. The use of a primer, such as Stops Rust Primer from Rust-Oleum can also help the paint adhere and provide a longer lasting finish.

Spray paints should only be used outdoors or in a well-ventilated area, such as an open garage. Do not apply in windy conditions. For the best drying, apply in temperatures between 50 and 90 degrees and with humidity less than 85 percent. Shake the can thoroughly then apply the paint in smooth even strokes approximately 12 inches from the surface, overlapping the strokes and keeping the spray nozzle the same distance from the surface at all times. It's best to apply in several medium coats, rather than one heavy coat to lessen the chances of runs and drips. In good conditions the paint should dry in 15 minutes, to the touch in 90 minutes, and should cure thoroughly within 48 hours.

In this case Rust-Oleum MultiColor Textured spray paint creates a rich and elegant textured surface on a previously drab black finish.

HANDSOME HARDWARE

Furniture is not the only household items that can be revamped with a new paint finish. If you've priced today's cabinet and furniture hardware, then you know they're quite expensive. Old hardware can often be redone with a new spray-on finish. We recently repainted some kitchen cabinet hardware and saved a ton of money. You can create an "antiqued" type of hardware finish by first spraying with a metallic paint, then rubbing "gilt" paste across the top surfaces. We have refurbished old light fixtures, furnace floor registers and a number of other items with a new sprayed finish. Appliances can also be spray painted. The first step is to thoroughly clean the item with mineral spirits and allow it to dry completely. Position the item so it can be sprayed from all sides, and then apply the spray paint according to the manufacturer's instructions.

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FAUX FINISHES

A number of other Valspar brand "Faux" paint finishes, designed primarily for covering walls can also be used to create unusual finishes on furniture. These included Textured Stone, Rag Rolling, Linen Weave, Color Washing, Sponging, Leather and Metals and Patinas. In most instances the entire furniture piece is not treated, only the top, panels of doors and other selected areas. In all instances these consist of first applying a base coat, then applying a top coat using a variety of tools to create the design desired. For more information on faux finish products and techniques, visit www.extremehowto.com. EHT

Today's spray paints can create unusual decor. The shelf shown is a 2 x 6, California Redwood scrap from a building project with a distressed gold finish. First step is to cut the shelf and rout the edges. Then cut a bottom support strip and fasten it to the underside of the shelf.

Spray or brush on an undercoat of plum or other dark paint to match the interior decor.

Rust-Oleum Pure Gold Metallic paint is then sprayed onto the surface.

While still wet, a foam brush is used to lightly remove some of the gold to allow the undercoat to show through.

Rub the edges with a soft cloth, or wait until the paint dries and use 0000 steel wool to rub off the edges.

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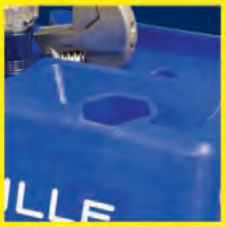

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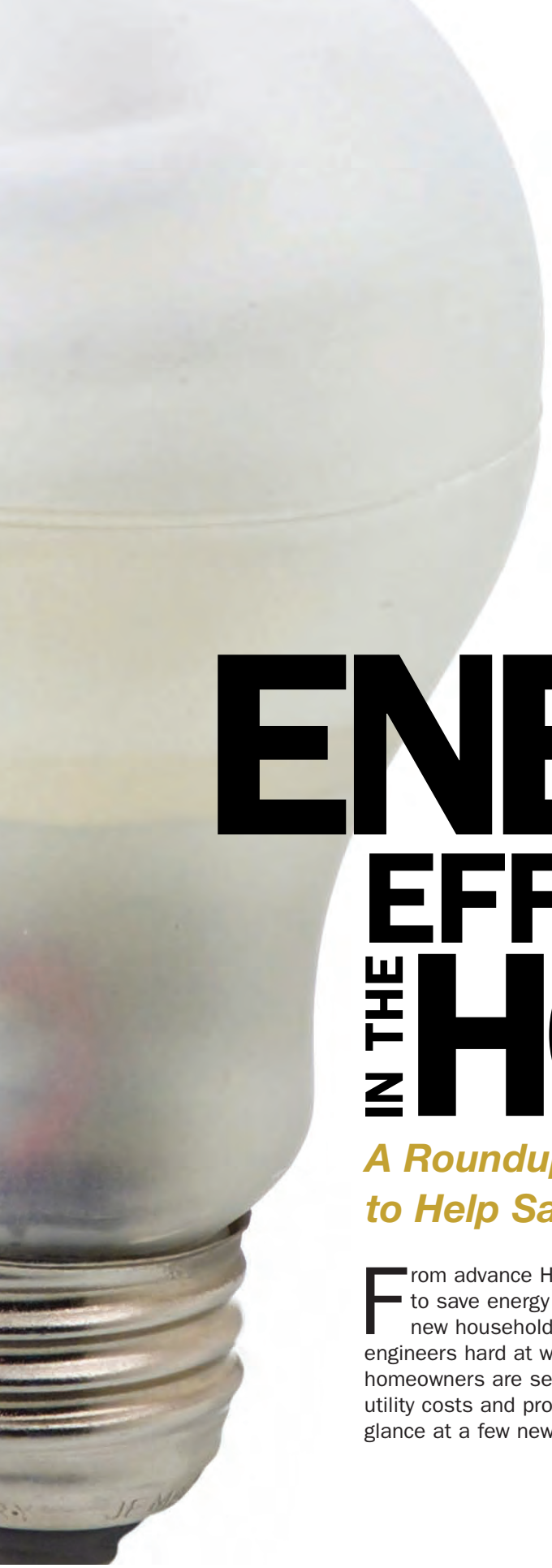

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN THE HOME

A Roundup of Cool New Products to Help Save Energy—and Money.

From advance HVAC systems to kitchen appliances, the drive to save energy in our homes is giving rise to all manner of new household products with a focus on conservation. With engineers hard at work to deliver the greenest products available, homeowners are seeing more and more opportunity to reduce utility costs and protect our natural energy resources. Here's a glance at a few new items to help tighten the belt.

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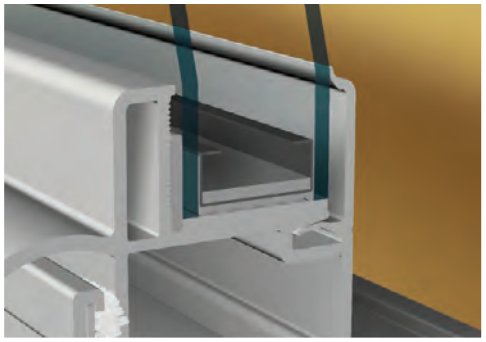

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FIRST INCANDESCENT-SHAPED CFL BULB

The new GE Energy Smart compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb features the GE Spiral CFL inside the glass bulb. With this new CFL—an exclusive design achievement that GE has protected with more than a dozen U.S. patent applications—the electronics fit in the neck of the bulb. The result is a profile that's virtually identical in appearance, size and fit to a traditional incandescent bulb, presenting an energy-efficient alternative to the sometimes unpopular spiral shape.

"These fit in more lamps and fixtures than standard GE Spiral CFLs with the plastic base," says Kathy Sterio, general manager of consumer marketing, GE Consumer & Industrial. "Some people just want an incandescent bulb profile so they can easily use it with clip-on lampshades or smaller table lamps. Other people may see it as more aesthetically pleasing than GE Spiral CFLs in lamps or fixtures where the bulb is visible. It provides a more finished or tailored look that appeals to a lot of consumers."

This new 15-watt incandescent-shaped CFL is the first in GE's new lineup. Between April and June 2009, GE plans to introduce 9-watt and 20-watt incandescent-shaped covered GE Energy Smart CFLs, 40-watt and 75-watt equivalents, respectively. Each will offer an 8,000-hour rated life and 5-year guarantee based on four hours of daily use. The 20-watt CFL will have a slightly taller profile that mirrors a standard incandescent 3-way bulb. A 100-watt equivalent, incandescent-shaped covered GE Energy Smart CFL and other inventive products for household applications could be introduced as early as 2010. Visit www.geappliances.com.

STOP ENERGY LOSS TO "PHANTOM POWER"

GreenSwitch is a product designed to eliminate "phantom power," which pulls extra energy into your home when you don't need it. This is power used by products such as monitors, printers, telephones, coffee makers, microwaves, stereos, space heaters, televisions, DVD players, battery chargers and much more. Most of these products continue to use power, even when they are turned off or not being used. This can add up to hundreds of dollars per year in a home. GreenSwitch is designed to eliminate this phantom power and prevent lights from being left on, as well as provide proper control of heat and air conditioning with just one switch. You can leave your home and have all the unnecessary power turned off, which can save 20 to 35 percent for the average home, according to the manufacturer.

The entire system is wireless and will easily retrofit into any existing home. Because it's a wireless system, no rewiring is required so it can usually be installed in about an hour. With the convenient flick of one switch, the GreenSwitch Master Switch sends a protected radio frequency to all GreenSwitch

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components, which are replacement switches and outlets that receive the frequency. This signal cuts power to designated lights and outlets and sets climate control to economy mode. Turn the switch back "on" to return the system to fully operational. The recommended GreenSwitch starter kit includes a master switch, a programmable "wand," a programmable thermostat, four light switches and four control outlets. Find out more at www.greenswitchteam.com.

TANKLESS WATER HEATER SUPPLIES THREE BATHROOMS

The new RTG-66DV direct-vent, gas-fired tankless water heater from Rheem is powerful enough to meet the hot water needs of a two- or three-bathroom home, yet takes up no more space than a standard household medicine cabinet. Measuring a modest 25-1/2 inches high, 13-1/2 inches wide and 10 inches deep, the new unit saves even more space and reduces installation time and expense through its use of concentric venting. Instead of separate Category III stainless steel vent runs for the fresh-air intake and exhaust lines, the RTG-66DV expels the byproducts of its combustion process through a 3-inch exhaust pipe that sits inside the 5-inch intake run, thus eliminating the second line. With inputs ranging from 11,000 BTU/hour to 180,000 BTU/hour, the unit delivers 120-degree F water at a rate of 6.6 gallons per minute (GPM) at a 45-degree F rise in

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temperature from input to output. At a 35-degree rise, the flow rate increases to 8.4 GPM. The new RTG-66DV carries a longer warranty than previous models: 12 years on the heat exchanger and 5 years on parts—up from 10 and 3, respectively. For more information on water heaters, visit www.rheem.com.

SUPER SAVER REFRIGERATOR

With 80 percent of consumers believing it is important to save energy and, in turn, money, at home, Whirlpool launches a refrigerator that does not sacrifice function for efficiency, exceeding federal efficiency standards by more than 30 percent. The new Resource Saver refrigerator is the most energy efficient side-by-side refrigerator ever. This refrigerator requires no more power than a 60-watt light bulb.

In addition to energy savings, the Resource Saver refrigerator offers several convenient features such as the In-Door-Ice Plus system, which places the ice dispenser and collection bin in the freezer door, giving easy access to ice and freeing up valuable freezer space—enough to store up to eight frozen pizzas.

To help stretch the dollar even further and better preserve food, the Resource Saver refrigerator is equipped with 6th Sense technology. This technology automatically adjusts cooling to bring existing food to the desired temperature in half the time. Additionally, it helps the refrigerator quickly return to normal operating temperatures.

A Fast Cool button, when selected, immediately drops the refrigerator and/or freezer temperatures to accommodate new food additions, such as hot leftovers. The technology does not affect the efficiency of the refrigerator. Learn more at www.whirlpool.com.

PINPOINT AREAS OF HEAT LOSS

Homeowners have a new, inexpensive yet highly effective weapon in the war against energy costs. The new Heat Seeker (Model IRT206) from General Tools & Instruments Co. is a handheld, easy-to-use tool that can detect and help stop energy loss around doors and windows, ovens and microwaves, insulation, ductwork and other areas throughout the home. This precision tool will also accurately sense temperature differentials in electrical fixtures to help locate and correct such hazards as overloaded circuit breakers or wiring. The Heat Seeker is a gun style, remote sensing, infra-red thermometer that enables users to obtain accurate temperature readings instantaneously, without having to physically contact the object. It performs the same tasks as heat-sensing tools designed for industry that cost hundreds of dollars, but the Heat Seeker is affordably priced to appeal to typical homeowners ($65.95). Its rugged, ergonomic design features a backlit LCD display with built-in laser sighting—just aim the laser pointer at a specific location for an instant temperature reading. For more information, visit www.generaltools.com or call 1-800-697-8665.

DEDICATED DUAL-FUEL HEAT PUMP

Lennox now offers a dedicated dual fuel heat pump designed to alternate seamlessly between electricity and gas to ensure efficient operation. The XPG15 heat pump functions as a heating and cooling system in one, reducing gas furnace fuel consumption. Enjoy electric cooling in the summer. Then, on cold days the gas furnace becomes the primary heat source, making use of the most efficient energy source possible. This system offers the best use of both energy sources. Defrost control enhances comfort, virtually eliminating the "cold blow" that can sometimes occur with dual-fuel heating. Plus, the patented Silent Comfort technology provides smooth, quiet cooling and heating. Visit www.Lennox.com or call 1-800-9-LENNOX.

SOLAR WATER HEATER WITH GAS BACKUP

The new Phoenix Solar Water Heater from Heat Transfer is the first solar water heater to combine domestic hot-water storage with a 97-percent efficient, gas-fired backup—all in one unit. What also makes the sealed-combustion, direct-vent Phoenix Solar exceptional is its ability to deliver both space heating and domestic hot water in a single, energy-saving package. Side tappings in the jacket permit auxiliary connections to a hydro-air system for space heating. Here, a pump circulates the heated water from the Phoenix Solar to a heat exchanger in the ductwork to provide heat for the living space. The unit can also power hydronic radiant floor heating and snow-melting systems.

"The dual capability of the Phoenix should be a major attraction to home and building owners and managers looking to cut energy consumption," says Heat Transfer CEO, Dave Davis. "It not only transfers all the energy the sun provides, but it also includes an ultra-high-efficiency backup when the sun's not enough." The Phoenix Solar incorporates a dedicated solar heat exchanger at the base of the unit, for transferring heat from solar panels to the water in its 80- or 119-gallon storage tank. Visit Heat Transfer at www.htproducts.com or call 1-800-323-9651. **EHT**

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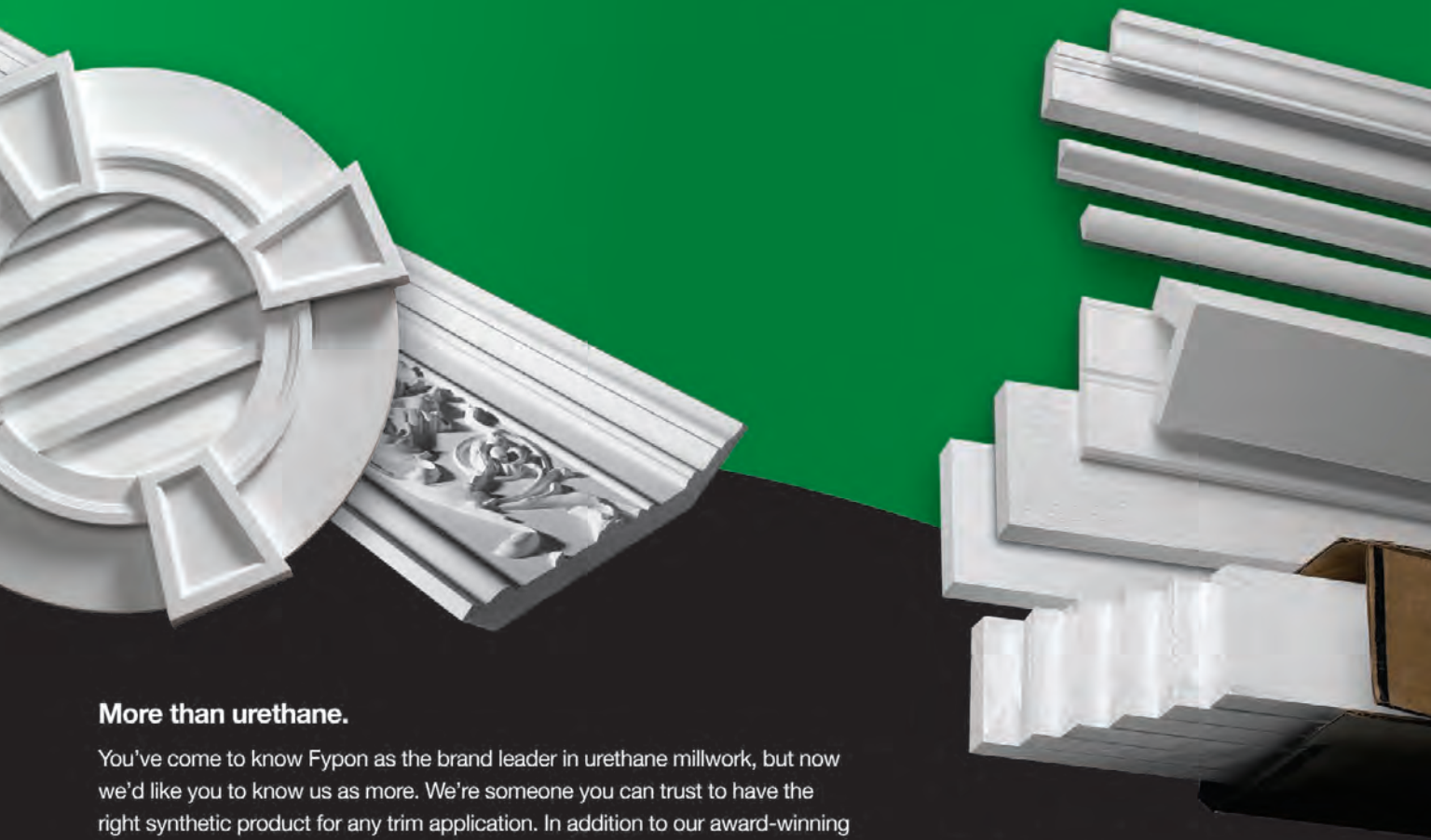

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TRIM TIPS FOR DOORS AND WINDOWS

Pro Moves for Fast and Accurate Casing

By Larry Walton

Ever been impressed by the skills of professionals? I love to watch professional hockey, probably because three times a week I play the game in a local league. Although I have learned a thing or two watching the NHL, I will never come close to matching their speed and accuracy on the ice.

When it comes to door and window casings, however, you can learn skills to match professional finish carpenters, which will greatly improve your speed and accuracy. A house with 20 doors and 20 windows will need 200 individual pieces of casing to trim out the interior. That's 200 boards that will need to be measured, cut, fit, glued and nailed into position.

Professional finish carpenters must find efficient ways to get this job done. You may not have plans to go pro as a trim carpenter, but you can benefit from pro tips in casing preparation, cutting multiples, consistent nailing sequence and precise adjustments.

PREPARATION

Getting the door jambs and window surrounds ready for casing varies a bit between remodel and new construction. Whether you are removing nails left over from the old casing or you are cutting off shims and beating back drywall on a new construction project, it's important to make sure that all of the windows and doors are ready before getting started.

We pull all of the doors off the hinges and set them aside. This really helps in prepping the door jambs. After cutting off any overhanging shims

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and beating back drywall (within the bounds of the planned casing), use a gauge block to mark the reveals on both the door jambs and window surrounds.

Make a list of the doors that need casing. Take note of which doors are exterior doors. Because the stops are constructed differently, like-sized exterior doors will have slightly different casing lengths, so cut these separately.

Make a list of the window surround sizes as well. Often you will have a parts cut list from building the surrounds that can be used as a reference for the windows. The important thing is to determine which windows have matching horizontal or vertical measurements.

Beat back the drywall that sticks out beyond the door jamb of the window surround. Be careful not to damage the jamb, and to stay within the borders of where the casing will be installed.

CUTTING MULTIPLES

Perhaps the most important concept when casing more than a couple of doors and windows is that casing lengths are usually repeated a number of times. Applying this concept, a pro can step up to a miter saw table and in a few minutes cut all of the casing for an entire house.

The largest volume of matching casing sizes will be found in the verticals of both windows and doors. For example, our house has 20 pieces of vertical window casing that are 62 inches in length. It has 40 left-hand mitered and 40 right-hand mitered vertical door pieces that are 83-1/2 inches.

With numbers like these it's easy to see how setting a stop on the miter saw table and cutting all of these pieces at once

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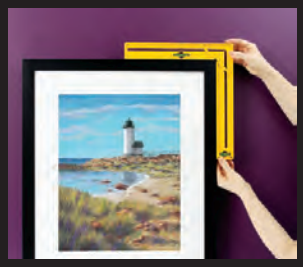
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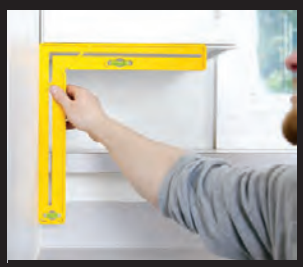
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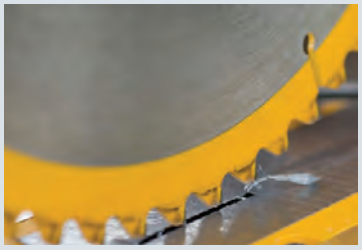
NO LASER? DUCT TAPE IT!

Install a piece of duct tape and cut it with the saw to get an accurate kerf mark. You can align the mark on your casing with the correct edge of the gap to speed up the process of making precise cuts.

Bridge over the kerf gap on the saw with a piece of duct tape.



Cut through the duct tape.

Align cut marks on the correct edge of the tape. Placing the mark on the other side would cut the piece short by the kerf of the saw blade.

This technique produces results accurate enough to split the width of a pencil mark.

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TRIM TIPS
FOR DOORS AND WINDOWS

Pro Moves for Fast and Accurate Casing

would be cost effective. However, smaller projects can also benefit from a production approach to cutting trim. My rule of thumb for using a stop on the saw is if you have three or more pieces of the same length, then it's faster to use the stop than to measure and mark each individual piece.

Not all of these pieces get cut to an exact length. Room for adjustments must be built into your system for installing window and door casings. At Oregon Carpenters we cut all of the header pieces (that is the top horizontal pieces) for windows and doors to the exact length. All others get a little extra room for adjustments. After all, this is finish work, which means it's all about precision and quality. We'll see how this extra room plays out as we go on.

When the corner of a surround sticks out past the wall surface, you can expect the casing will need to be rolled or back-cut to make the adjustment.

When the corner of a window surround is slightly recessed, the cuts will need to be slightly less than 45 degrees to make the miter work.

To apply the multiple-piece concept, rough-cut enough stock slightly over-size to make all of the header pieces for your project. Although this seems pretty basic, I've seen rookies incorrectly cut plenty of material. Make sure you cut the pieces long enough to accommodate the width of the casing. For example, 2-1/4-inch casing

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requires a header piece that is 5 inches longer than the door size. A door that is 30 inches wide requires a horizontal casing piece that is a minimum of 35 inches. However, don't cut it this close when roughing out your material; 36 inches is a safer bet.

With all the header pieces rough-cut to length, cut a 45-degree miter on one end of all of the pieces. Take one piece to the nearest door and hold it into position so the short point of the miter aligns with the reveal mark. Mark the bottom edge of the casing piece at the other reveal mark and take the piece back to the saw.

Make sure you are cutting the second miter in the opposite direction from the existing cut, align the mark with the kerf cut (or laser) on the proper side of the blade and cut the header to length. This is your pattern header piece for all matching headers. Test it for length at the matching doors or windows to make sure it will work.

Use the pattern header to set the stop on the saw. Lock the saw head down, place the piece against the blade and along the fence. Clamp, nail or tighten your stop against the sharp point at the other end of the piece. Cut the remaining matching header pieces by first making a 45-degree cut on the same end as your stop (e.g., on the left if the stop is on the left) and then using this cut against the stop to cut the others. Place each trim piece near the door or window where it will be installed.

Use a gauge block with a 1/4" rabbet to mark the reveals on the jambs and the surrounds.

Pencil marks can be heavy on painted projects, but natural woods and stain-grade projects require barely visible marks.

TRIM TIPS
FOR DOORS AND WINDOWS

Pro Moves for Fast and Accurate Casing

HEAD FIRST

Nail up all the header pieces, beginning with your 18-gauge brad nailer using 1-1/4-inch brads. Align one end with the reveal mark and then tack it in place to the door jamb or window surround. Align the other end and nail it up as well. Nail through the casing and into the jamb or surround every 8 inches.

A good way to get the rough length of a header casing is to add the width of the casing times two. In this case, 2-1/4" casing requires approximately 5" of extra material to make the miters. Rough this one off at 34".

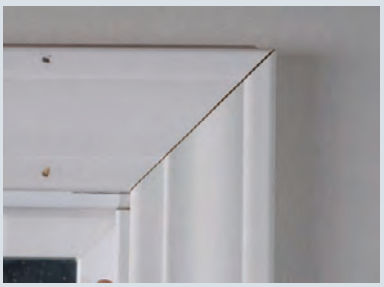
Back-nail all of the headers using your 18-gauge gun with 2-inch nails or a 16-gauge nailer with 1-3/4 to 2-1/2 inch nails. Back-nails go through the casing near the outside edge, through the drywall and into the framing. Back-nails should be spaced at about 16 inches. This is an important step. Having the header installed and back-nailed gives you a solid piece to adjust for the remaining pieces of casing and prevents the miter from blowing apart, which can happen if the back-nails are added later.

VERTICAL MOVES

With the headers installed, you can now measure for the trimmers (vertical pieces) while keeping in mind the multiple-piece cutting approach. Doors in

GAP AT LONG POINT—ROLL IT

A gap at the long point of a miter probably means the jamb or surround are slightly outside of the wall surface. This actually creates a compound angle. You can tip a compound miter saw to create a little back-cut plus adjust the angle. What I usually do, however, is leave the saw at 45 and roll the piece.



When a miter doesn't fit, notice where the gap is widest.

Mark the end of the piece with "X"s to indicate where to take away material and slashes to make sure the new angle cuts all the way across the piece.

A gap at the long point can usually be corrected by rolling the piece in the saw, which produces a compound angle.

Bump the piece to the saw blade for position. Raise the saw clear before starting the motor.

After one pass you can still see the hash marks, which means you need to take a little more material to get the cut to go all the way across the joint surface.

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areas where carpet will be installed can be cut so they are slightly above the subfloor. If the finished floor surface is in place, cut the verticals slightly long (1/4 inch) to allow for miter adjustments. The trimmers can be held away from the door jamb at the bottom as you test the miter. Only the upper 2 feet or so needs to be aligned with the door jamb as you check and adjust the miter. If the first 2 feet coming away from a miter looks good, you can pull the remainder in line as you nail it.

Window verticals should also be cut slightly long. In fact, you can save time by leaving the bottom cut square until you have checked and adjusted the miter.

Cut all of the verticals and place them near the door or window where each will be installed. Check each miter and adjust as necessary before cutting the verticals to length (if needed).

One of the best ways to make accurate miter adjustments is to imitate the gap that you see at the door or window with the saw blade at the table. This is especially helpful when the long point is touching and there is a gap at the short point. Take the piece back to the saw, lock the head down and rotate the saw's miter setting slightly so the gap you see against the blade looks like the one you saw against the header piece on your project. Lock in your miter adjustment on the saw.

Make two marks on the miter cut at the end where the gap is largest. When these marks disappear you have cut enough to ensure that the miter has been changed across the entire length of the cut. Make several passes with the saw if necessary so you

There is no need to mark the casing when cutting to approximate lengths. Hook the tape to one end and move the piece until the mark on the tape is nearly aligned with the kerf mark on the saw table.

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can sneak up on your cut without cutting off too much.

Go back to the door or window, check the miter again. If it's good, mark the piece to be cut for length. On windows this means transferring the reveal mark at the other end of the piece onto the casing. For doors you can invert the piece, putting the long point on the floor and marking where the top edge of the header intersects the edge of the casing. Cut it square at the mark.

You are now ready to glue and nail the vertical pieces in place. Run a bead of carpenters glue along the back edge of the miter cut and assemble the joint in its final position. Squeeze the miter together as you nail the first few inches into the jamb or window

Hold the short point of the first miter on the vertical reveal mark while marking the short point of the other end.

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surround. If the casing piece is a bit warped so the bottom portion is going away from the door opening, back-nail the piece near the top before nailing the casing to the jamb.

Continue nailing the casing to the jamb or window surround except the lower 1-1/2 feet of the right vertical piece on windows. Leave this section loose until the lower horizontal piece can be matched to it. As you nail the verticals, pay attention to the reveal on the jamb or surround to keep it consistently 1/4 of an inch. You are now working out any warps or twists that are in your piece of casing and making it conform to the straight lines of the door jamb or window surround.

Back-nailing the headers makes a fixed point to adjust the miters and prevents the joint from opening up.

To cut multiple pieces quickly and accurately, use the first piece as a pattern. Lock the saw head down and place the first miter cut against the saw. Make sure the piece is against the saw fence and fasten a stop on the support.

Now, cut the lower horizontals for the picture-frame style window casing. Cut the pieces as multiples but add about 1/4 inch to the length. Test the miter first on the left end and make adjustments. Test the miter at the right end and adjust as needed, but leave the saw set at the adjusted angle. If the miter looks good, transfer the right reveal mark to the casing and cut it to

GAP AT SHORT POINT—LESS THAN 45.

This miter has a gap on this side, which means it needs some material taken off of the long point.

With experience you can match quarter degrees with what you saw as you tested the miter.

Mark an "X" at the long point where material needs to be removed and slashes at the short point to indicate a complete cut.

Another way to set the saw is to imitate the gap you saw when testing the miter. This is essentially a way of mentally scribing the piece to fit.

Most saws have a lock-out to keep the set points from automatically jumping back to 45 degrees.

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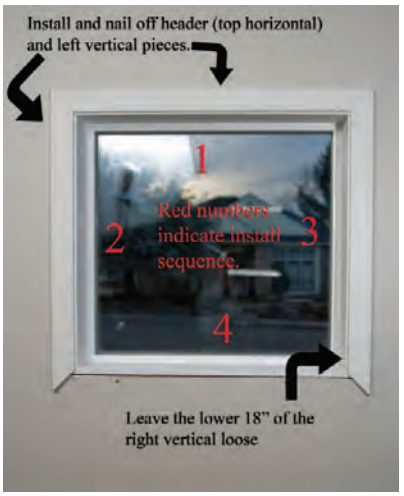
length using the adjusted angle on the saw.

Glue the miters at both ends and nail the left half of the lower window horizontal piece into place. Pull the right miter together, shifting the horizontal piece up or down and the vertical piece left or right until the miter looks good and finish nailing both pieces. EHT

Duplicate pieces are made by putting the long point of the first cut against the stop and cutting the second angle.

Run a bead of carpenter's glue along the back edge of the cut surface.


Install and nail off header (top horizontal) and left vertical pieces.
1
2
Red numbers indicate install sequence.
3
4
Leave the lower 18" of the right vertical loose

Leave the bottom horizontal piece for last.

Lap the miters over each end as you test the miter at the other end of the bottom horizontal piece.

This horizontal piece is cut accurately. The right vertical needs to move a bit to the right so the insides of the miters line up, which will also make the reveals correct.

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EXPERT ADVICE ON PLANNING A KITCHEN

By Karen Templer

When the time has come to plan your dream kitchen, consider the advice of the following building professionals from across the United States. This article was originally published in *Kitchens: A Sunset Design Guide* in 2009 by Sunset Books.

For starters, collecting inspirational photos and looking for the consistencies among them will help you develop your initial ideas. Photos and your notes can also help you keep the entire project on track, providing both budgetary and design guidance. "It's important for people to get everything out on paper so they understand the magnitude of what they want," says design principal Erik Barr, "because, quite honestly, they can't afford it. So you have to go through it all and prioritize."

PRIORITIZING

It's a cold reality, but most people don't have the budget to do everything they want. However, before you begin striking things from your wish list, do some cost comparisons, get professional input, and question your own preconceptions. After careful consideration, you might decide that the things you value most are not the ones you initially thought.

What advice do our experts have to offer when it comes to setting priorities? General contractor Brian Eby believes that "adequate storage and functional layout are more important than aesthetic matters."

Architect Kathryn Rogers concurs: "A kitchen is about quality of life. You have to have places to put things."

A team of remodeling professionals offers sage advice on making your kitchen dreams a reality.

EXPERT ADVICE ON **PLANNING** A **KITCHEN**

For architect Benjamin Nutter, it's a matter of longevity: "A kitchen is the working space of a home and where people spend their time, so we think about its use over time. It's the place in the house with the most moving parts, and it needs to stand up." So, he too strives to get the most functionality he can within a client's budget.

Echoing that, interior designer Kathy Farley says, "Colors can always be painted out, but with materials I really want them to make sense for a long period of time."

"It's worth it to spend money on the things you will touch every day," adds Barr. "For instance, if you like to cook, it might be worth it to you to have a nice stove. Cabinet hardware is a thing you touch every day, so that might be a priority. Or it might be the countertop and the sink." Cleanup is a constant, and Barr notes that the way a sink is detailed in a counter matters, and is worth getting right. The same goes, in his view, for the finish on any wood elements.

While our panelists agree that a good stove is a wise investment for serious cooks, several feel that it's easy to overspend on appliances. "People tend to put in more appliances—and bigger appliances—than they need, which takes away storage space," says architectural designer Michelle Rein. "So do you really need these things? Are you really going to use them?"

Despite being an avid cook, Kathy Farley feels that an eight-burner range rarely makes sense—"You'll never use eight burners at once"—and she notes that not all expensive appliances live up to their price tags. Farley, Rein, and Nutter all counsel clients to visit manufacturers' showrooms in their area and even to sign up for the cooking classes that take place right in the showroom, allowing people to try out different appliances. "Be a savvy shopper," says Rein. "There are better appliances for less money that will give you a beautiful look for most kitchens. You don't have to spend top dollar."

Erik Barr has one more piece of advice, which is to beware of the thing you covet most: "Often the thing you're digging in your heels about is the thing that has to go." He has experienced this situation not only with clients but with his own renovation. Letting go of the idea he was clinging to—preserving the original butler's pantry—changed the entire project for the better. He can say from experience that, for the designer or architect, "Having wiggle room is paramount. The ability to think outside the box is why you should bring in a professional in the first place, and what

gives a professional a leg up. So don't get attached to anything. You'll lose out in the end."

ENLISTING HELP

The kind and quantity of professionals you'll need to work with to create your new kitchen depend on the scope of the project. If you're doing strictly cosmetic work, you can always paint the room yourself. Relocating outlets, fixtures, sinks and appliances may require the help of electricians and plumbers. Other changes might call for carpentry, drywall or tile contractors. The more complicated the job—and the more numerous the contractors—the more important it is to have a general contractor to coordinate the work and oversee its quality, as well as anticipate and apply for needed permits. Working with an architect or interior designer with extensive kitchen experience, no matter the scope of the remodel, can pay dividends.

"If you're spending a good chunk of money to substantially improve your kitchen," says Brian Eby, "allocate 10 or 20 percent of it to hiring a professional designer or architect. They'll be able to help you get the most bang for your buck and will also have a good handle on any resale issues." As a general contractor, Eby has seen firsthand, time and again, the impact of professional clarity and objectivity: "[On your own] you will do things the way you've had them before or have seen them done; a pro will have a whole different, unfettered perspective." Pros also bring to the table ample knowledge of materials and appliances—and the pricing and availability thereof—potentially saving you both money and time.

When looking for a professional, it's vital to interview multiple candidates and ask for references. Eby recommends contacting several references, visiting completed job sites—especially those with similarities to your project—and, of course, asking about the contractor's performance, including regarding budget and deadlines. "Anyone should

be completely comfortable giving you those references—you're not being unreasonable in asking for them. And if anyone is hesitant about giving them to you, consider that a red flag." A good general contractor will have a regular crew or a roster of subcontractors, from painters to electricians, which he or she has worked directly with in the past and can vouch for.

If you need design help but can't afford a trained architect or designer—and don't assume that without interviewing a few—there are good software programs that will help you develop your floor plan. You'll also find "kitchen designers" on staff wherever cabinets are sold. These are employees trained in the use of computer modeling programs for translating a floor plan into 3D, but they generally are not formally trained architects or interior designers.

"They might not actually be good at thinking spatially," cautions architect Neal Schwartz. "Plus, their job is to sell cabinets, so they'll want to solve every problem with a piece of cabinetry when there may be a better option. You can wind up with inefficient cabinetry and a kitchen that doesn't take advantage of assets like the light or the flow of the space." So even with in-store pros, ask for and follow up on references to ensure you're working with someone who will improve on what you could do yourself.

BUDGETS AND SCHEDULES

"You'd think it would be obvious, but scheduling seems to be a challenge because we're all so used to getting things instantly," says Benjamin Nutter. "So we talk to clients quite a bit about schedule." Construction projects are disruptive and take time—notoriously longer than the estimate—so be prepared for the reality. Nutter raises the related issue of your availability once work begins. If you're able to meet regularly to discuss progress and ideas, a project can be more flexible, with design decisions made as construction progresses. If your schedule prohibits that, you'll want the design to be more or less complete before the work begins. That difference in strategy can impact the total time the project takes.

Then there's the extreme variability of costs beyond the general construction estimate. "Unlike the rest of the house," Nutter explains, "construction costs [for kitchens] can be misleading because they can easily double once you factor in cabinetry, counters and appliances." Construction costs aren't nearly as flexible as your material costs will be, which may require some flexibility when you choose the materials. For example, the labor cost for laying a tile floor will depend almost strictly on square footage, so it will be largely the same regardless of the tile you choose. But the cost of the tile itself will vary quite drastically depending on whether it's linoleum or limestone. Drawing up a basic plan and getting labor bids early in the process will help you to know how much of your budget will be available for materials, which will then guide what those materials will be. Or you may find you're more flexible about some aspect of the construction than you are about materials. For example, you may choose to forgo a skylight in order to get that limestone floor.

On the subject of construction costs, Erik Barr notes, "Small jobs don't necessarily cost less. There's no economy of scale, and no contractor wants a small job anyway." In his experience, it doesn't make design or economic sense to constrain a contractor by clinging, for instance, to the position of a window or door. "People have this notion that if they keep it contained it'll keep the price down," he says, but it's not necessarily the case.

Kathryn Rogers likes to show clients alternatives to what they think they want, along with comparative costs, because often the difference in the cost of a more substantive change is less

It's a cold reality, but most people don't have the budget to do everything they want. After careful consideration, you might decide that the things you value most are not the ones you initially thought.

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than expected, and the results much greater. So she draws each project up three different ways and prices them out, and clients are consistently surprised. "They really have to see it," she says.

Because remodeling projects are inherently unpredictable to some degree, every job has the potential to take longer and cost more than initially expected—you really have to count on that. If you can't afford to go over budget, don't price the job out at the full amount—set 15 to 20 percent aside for contingencies. For example, if you have $45,000 to spend and not a penny more, proceed as though you have only $35,000 and cost out all labor and materials to fall under that figure. Then you'll have some wiggle room to change your mind, and you'll be covered if it turns out your subfloor is rotten or the range you love gets discontinued and the new model costs more. In any case, ask your contractor for a job schedule, know the delivery windows on everything you need to order, and make sure orders are placed such that materials are on hand as they're needed. Delays cost money.

DEMOLITION AND DECONSTRUCTION

Demolition on even the smallest scale raises environmental, safety, and health concerns ranging from hazardous construction materials to overtaxed landfills.

The primary hazard of demolition is that there's no telling what is in or under the floor, wall, ceiling, and even countertop surfaces without cutting or tearing into them. But doing so in a home built before the 1980s can inadvertently unleash toxic and cancer-causing substances such as lead and asbestos. If you work with a contractor, he or she should be well versed in issues relating to these matters; if you plan to do home-improvement projects yourself, do your research first. Most people associate lead with paint and asbestos with insulation, but there are numerous adhesives and construction materials—including floor and ceiling tiles and even fabrics—with asbestos content.

There are also ceramic glazes that contain lead. (Imported tiles available today may still have lead content in their glazes.) Asbestos is hazardous only when airborne, so if an old floor is glued down and stable, your best bet is to leave it and put the new floor over it, in case the old flooring or the glue contains asbestos. If you plan to remove old flooring or wallpaper, sand painted surfaces, chisel out tile, or cut into walls, test the surfaces before the work begins. Look for an accredited testing lab in your town, which should also be able to inform you about removal and disposal guidelines and requirements should materials in your home test positive for hazardous substances.

Then there's the matter of waste. Anytime you can reuse existing materials or other elements in your kitchen—whether by refinishing existing cabinets or floors or refurbishing a stove—you will limit both the amount of waste you create and your consumption of newly manufactured materials, and you will likely save money in the process. When tearing out anything you won't reuse, strive to deconstruct rather than demolish. You can donate cabinets, sinks, and floorboards to various agencies or sell them to salvage companies, keeping the materials in circulation and, again, out of landfills. Your city may even require that you do so. Many municipalities now grant building permits contingent on waste management plans, some mandating that as much as 80 percent of removed materials be recycled or made available to salvage companies rather than sent to the landfill. All of this is good for you as well as the planet—those same salvage companies may have the reclaimed wood floor you've been dreaming of. EHT

MORE KITCHEN ADVICE FROM THE PROS

For a detailed look at the latest ideas on design and materials, consider *Kitchens: A Sunset Design Guide*, the new publication from Sunset Books in which this article originally appeared. Learn from real-world solutions based on the skilled expertise of kitchen remodeling professionals. Packed with essential advice and the latest information on green materials, energy conservation and safety issues, the book also includes the "Sunset Kitchen Designer," a CD of interactive software to design your dream kitchen and then see it from any angle in 3D view. For more information, visit www.oxmoorhouse.com.

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DIY TILE COUNTERTOP

Install it Yourself and Save.

By Matt Weber

Available in a wide range of patterns, colors and prices, tile makes a durable countertop that can be installed by the handy do-it-yourselfer to save considerably on installation costs. By mixing and matching various colors and sizes, porcelain, ceramic and stone tile can also be installed in a variety of patterns complete with borders and accents to enhance the décor.

A tile installation can be fairly simple or complex, but with this particular countertop application I wanted to minimize the number of grout lines for a nearly slab-like appearance. Using larger tiles for the countertop surface kept the layout fairly simple and straightforward. On the project shown

I used 18-inch tiles for the countertop surface with 4-inch tumbled marble tile for the backsplash, all installed with a square, uniform layout. Regardless of the type and size of tile you select, the installation instructions that follow remain largely the same.

PREP STEPS

Shop carefully for tile and don't be afraid to ask for samples to take home and compare to your interior décor. My wife and I had two very different criteria for our countertop. Shanna was all about the look. I was interested in easy installation, low maintenance and the longevity of the finished project. And, we were both interested in saving money.

Lucky for us, we live across the street from a professional tile installer, Frank Cantey, a super-nice guy who had a selection of tiles leftover from previous jobs. Shanna was partial to earth tones to complement the porcelain floor tile and the neutral kitchen color scheme. I was partial to easy installation. I liked the idea that large tiles would equate to fewer grout joints (less to clean, less worry of cracks), as well as the prospect of fewer tiles to install. I reasoned that the larger the size of the tile, the fewer tiles I would have to ensure are completely level for a flat countertop. Frank had a perfect fit, a selection of 18-inch tiles in brown tones with a natural, mottled appearance, which he kindly donated to our project.

We wanted to differentiate the backsplash to spice up the décor, so we bought the smaller tumbled marble tiles at our local Lowe's store. The marble had a naturally warm and random color scheme similar to the countertop tile, but unlike the large tiles, the smaller ones weren't polished. The face of the marble tiles also featured many irregular pits and cavities, which we knew would drink up the colored grout for a really neat, cohesive look we had seen modeled at a local tile store.

Once you've selected your tile, gather all materials and tools on site. For materials, you'll need the tile, tile adhesive, tile backerboard, plastic spacers, grout (tinted to your preference) and tile sealer (depending on your type of tile). Along the edge of this countertop I installed custom-made oak trim. In some cases, you may opt for edge tiles, which are usually rounded with a bullnose to prevent chipping. For tools, I recommend a tile saw with a diamond blade, tile nippers, a utility knife, hand level, power drill and paddle attachment to mix the mortar, a notched trowel, a rubber float, and a bucket and sponge for cleanup.

OUT WITH THE OLD

If there's any old tile on the countertop, you'll need to remove it, as well as any sinks, stoves or other obstacles in your way. (If possible, don't try to tile "around" the obstacles—it'll look unprofessional). On counters that won't be exposed to water, you can install the tile directly to the plywood. If installing over bare plywood in a moisture-prone area, first cover it with a moisture-resistant membrane such as 15-pound felt paper or 4-mil polyethylene sheeting.

The kitchen countertop shown in this article was originally covered in plastic laminate over a plywood subsurface. I left the laminate in place to serve as my moisture membrane. I then beefed up the countertop by laminating some Hardibacker cement board over the surface, which adds extra strength and provides a good surface to which the tile adhesive can securely bond.

I measured and marked the cement board to match the countertop and cut it to fit. You can

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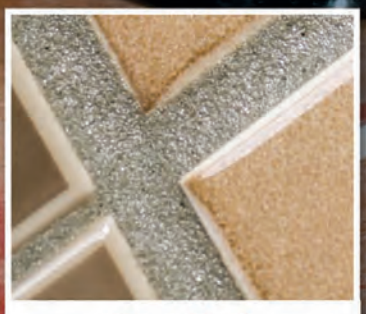

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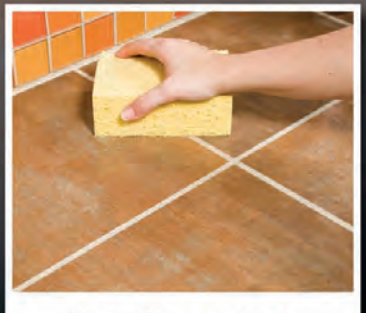

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cut cement board by scoring it with a utility knife along a straight edge, then snapping it at the score line. Or, you can use a cutting tool like the Excalibur powered shears, which greatly speeds up the process. The Excalibur Building Board Cutter achieves a straight, dust-free cut with no ragged edges (www.excaliburtools.com). It's the most accurate cement-board cutting tool I've ever used. I advise

The Excalibur Building Board Cutter quickly achieves a straight, accurate and dust-free cut in cement board.

against cutting cement board with a powered circ saw with a diamond blade, because it generates a lot of cement dust, which is hazardous to breathe.

Next, I used 1-1/4-inch deck screws to secure the cement board to the countertop, driving

the screws through the designated fastener holes printed on the Hardibacker. (Note: Depending on how your counter is built, it may be advisable to reinforce its construction from below by screwing wood strips along the perimeter and crosspieces over the cabinets to support the extra weight of the tile.)

I then laid out a dry run of tiles and spacers. A rule of thumb is to arrange the layout so the last partial tile of each row measures at least half the width of the tile (rather than a skinny, awkward-looking tile at the end of each row). Adjust the layout to your preference, accounting for grout joints, any overhangs or edge treatments, and trying to minimize the number of cuts. Always place full tiles at the front of the counter with the partial tiles running along the backsplash.

Once you're satisfied with the dry run, you may find it useful to mark layout lines, especially if using trim tiles along the exposed edges. In the project shown, I set the tiles 1/8 inch away from the edge of the countertop. This 1/8-inch edge joint matched the 1/8-inch grout joints created by plastic spacers that I placed between each tile.

IN WITH THE NEW

Mix the tile adhesive according to the manufacturer's instructions. I used MAPEI's Ulraflex 2 polymer-modified mortar and whipped it up with water until it neared "cake frosting" workability. Use a notched trowel to spread enough adhesive to lay several tiles along the front row. Lay your key tiles first, such as an end tile or centered tile, to serve as a starting point. Press the tile in place and twist it slightly to set it into the adhesive. Use the plastic tile spacers at each joint and corner of the tile for uniform grout lines.

Spread more adhesive as necessary, combing it with the notched trowel for an even bed height. Continue laying rows of full tile, working as far toward the backsplash as you can without cutting partial tiles. Frequently use a straightedge or hand level to check the flatness of the tiles and adjust them as needed. Use a framing square along the grout

lines to make sure the installation is properly aligned. As you progress from row to row, use a screwdriver to remove any adhesive from the tile joints before it hardens.

For a square installation, you should be able to cut all the partial tiles the same size, but it's a good idea to measure periodically to see if this will work. To mark a cut for a partial tile, set one tile over an installed full tile, allowing space for grout seams, and mark the overhang line accordingly. The most productive way to cut tile is by using a wet saw with a diamond blade, such as the Ridgid model shown (www.ridgid.com). The water pump of a wet saw provides a continuous cooling spray to the blade during cutting, which reduces heat for longer blade life. For cutouts or smaller tile, a smaller tile saw or spiral saw with tile bit can be used. To make intersecting cuts in tile, begin the two cuts with the circular diamond blade, but finish the cut with tile nippers to prevent overcutting.

For the most part, the backsplash was installed in exactly the same manner as the countertop surface, only it took longer because of the smaller size and greater number of tiles involved. Because of the various color tones, I did arrange a dry run of tiles, laid flat on the countertop (protected by cardboard) so I could mix and match the varied tones to my liking. But other than evenly distributing the colors, it was a very simple layout, starting from the bottom row and working upward to the partials on the top row.

One note about the backsplash installation: Count on adding outlet extensions. In my case, I realized that once the tile is installed, the electrical outlets would be too far recessed into the backsplash to replace the plastic faceplates. Hardware stores typically sell extensions for plastic outlet

A wet saw equipped with a diamond blade, such as the new Ridgid model shown, will make quick work of cutting large tiles to size.

boxes for these exact situations. To install, first disconnect the power supply and then unscrew the outlet. The plastic extension is basically just a rectangular plastic "ring" that fits over the face of an existing box. Just thread the outlet through the extension, screw the extension to the box, then screw the outlet to the extension in the same manner you would with a standard electrical box.

FINAL STRETCH

Next came the edging, which I ripped from some 1-by oak lumber leftover from a previous project. I ripped each piece roughly 3-1/2 inches wide and routed a bullnose on the top of each by running them through my router table with a roundover bit. I then stained and sealed each piece before measuring, mitering and fastening each trim stick with finish nails into the plywood edge of the counter. For a finished look, fill the nail holes with stainable putty, let it dry, sand it flush and stain the putty to match.

If you have the right tools, the edging is fairly easy to make, but remember to rout the oak in several passes, because router bits have a tendency to burn hardwoods when under too much stress. I did, however, run into trouble where the countertop edging met the

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oven/stove combo. The lip of the stove was too narrow to cover the oak trim. I couldn't alter the construction of the stove, so I altered the edging by carefully measuring and marking a notch that would fit behind the plastic lip of the stove. To do so, I used the new 12-volt Max Multi-X from Bosch (www.boschtools.com). This cordless oscillating tool can be fitted with a number of accessories, such as the plunge cut blade shown in the photo. This made it easy to jamb the Multi-X blade into the cutline with accurate control and no over-cutting. The resulting notch was a success, and I could fit the stove into the countertop with no problem.

Before grouting, use painter's tape to mask off the edging, the adjoining walls and cabinetry, as well as anything else you want to protect from the grout.

To minimize cleanup and keep a consistent color scheme, I grouted the backsplash first and the countertop immediately afterward using the same grout mixture. To complement the earth tones of the tile, I used MAPEI's Opticolor grout with a "mushroom" tint (www.mapei.com). Opticolor is a stain-free grout that has better color uniformity and durability than cement grouts. Plus, no sealer is required. It will also clean to the original color and contains antimicrobial protection for mold and mildew resistance, which is great for kitchens.

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Mix the two-part Opticolor in a bucket according to the instructions. Use a rubber float to scoop up the grout and work it into the tile joints. Work the float on a diagonal to press the grout deep into the joints. You'll need to make several passes to ensure complete coverage and eliminate air bubbles. As the grout becomes firm, use a damp sponge to remove the excess from the tile surface. Keep a bucket of clean water nearby to frequently rinse the sponge. A sponge made with an abrasive pad on one side will make it easier to scrub loose the stubborn grout from the face of the tile. Cleaning the excess grout will take several passes to completely eliminate the haze.

As mentioned, Opticolor requires no sealing, but sealing is

The Bosch Max Multi-X is a new oscillating tool that simplifies tricky cuts, like notching the edge of this countertop to fit a stove.

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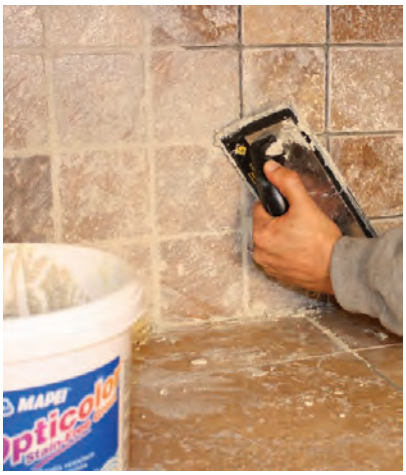
recommended for many other types of grout. For the countertop shown, I brushed tile sealer over the entire countertop and backsplash—to protect the tile, not the grout.

MAPEI's Opticolor product is a stain-free grout available in a wide range of colors.

I was pleased with the finished project. The neutral colors of the tile blended well with the kitchen, and I was surprisingly able to stain the oak trim to a nearly exact match as the oak cabinets. This kitchen is now ready for cookin'. **EHT**



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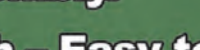
- **3 Custom colors**  **to choose from.**

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Countertop Pros and Cons

What You Can Expect from your Countertop Choice

Laminate countertops, such as the one pictured, present a durable, economic choice that can be installed by the DIY'er.

By Matt Weber

We expect a lot from a countertop. A countertop serves as a heavily used work surface as well as a decorative focal point. The right material choice for your countertop should reflect your lifestyle and balance your desire for good looks, durability and low maintenance. Today, there are more choices in countertop material than ever before, and *EHT* offers a few pros and cons of eight of the most popular countertops, as well as a peek at some innovative recycled materials to hit the market.

GRANITE

Granite countertops are among the hottest materials for the discriminating homeowner. Available in thousands of colors, granite countertops are natural stone that can be polished to a smooth, lustrous finish that holds up well to heat and can potentially last a lifetime. With the application of one of today's low-maintenance sealers, a granite countertop will resist stains and add value to the home.

On the down side, granite is among the most expensive countertop materials, ranging from $50 to $200 per square foot, installed. If choosing granite, then consider future renovations because, being a natural stone, it can be hard to match granite's exact color if adding a new section at a later time. Granite requires occasional resealing and can crack if improperly installed. And, although granite tiles are available for the DIY'er, the slab countertops generally require professional installation.

ENGINEERED STONE

Engineered stone is available in even more colors than granite and boasts a scratch-resistant nonporous surface. Composed primarily from quartz, the many vibrant colors and styles can mimic natural stone, while the surface remains very stain- and scratch-resistant. Additionally, engineered stone is somehat more flexible than granite and less likely to crack.

Engineered stone, composed primarily from quartz, can mimic natural stone in a wide array of vibrant colors.

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However, sharp edges have a tendency to chip, so bull-nosed edges are preferred. Another pricey material, engineered stone ranges from about $50 to $100 per square foot when professionally installed, and has the same installation challenges as slab granite countertops. Popular brands of engineered stone include Silestone, DuPont Zodiaq and Cambria Quartz.

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TILE

Ceramic and Porcelain tile are heat-resistant materials available in tons of patterns, colors and prices. With a little imagination, the installer can arrange practically any creative pattern by mixing, matching and custom-cutting tiles. Tile allows the creation of border accents, diagonal tile installation, and many more creative layouts. Tile can range from

$10 to $40 per square foot for professional installation. However, tiling a countertop is in the realm of the savvy DIY'er, which can shave a lot off the overall job cost.

After they've been sealed, tile countertops are easy to clean and very durable. However, tile can also chip at the edges. For this reason, wood edging or bull-nosed border tiles are often used at the countertop edges. Another weakness lies with the grout joints, which can sometimes stain. Large tiles with fewer grout lines can minimize this, as can thinner grout joints and tinted

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grout. However, manufacturers such as MAPEI have made great strides in formulating a stain-resistant grout called Opticolor to eliminate this problem (www.mapei.com).

SOLID SURFACE

Available in a wide array of vibrant colors and styles, solid surface countertops, such as Swanstone and DuPont Corian, can mimic stone, quartz or concrete. Although solid surfaces can scratch easily, the solid coloring throughout the material allows the scratches to be sanded out for repair. Plus, professional installation can achieve a seamless countertop that is highly stain-resistant.

On the downside, solid surface countertops can be expensive at $35 to $100 per square foot, installed. Certain suppliers do offer solid surface materials for DIY installation, but achieving the professional seamless appearance can be a challenge for an inexperienced installer.

LAMINATE

Offering the widest range of colors and patterns on the market, laminate countertops also excel at resisting stains, water and heat from hot dishes. Popular brands of laminate include Formica and Wilsonart, which sell for a modest price of $10 to $30 per square foot, installed. Or, you can save money by plunking down $40 to $80 for a 4-by-8-foot sheet of laminate and install the material yourself—it goes down fairly easily with a roller and contact cement. You'll need a circular saw or utility knife to cut
it to shape and a router to trim the edges.

On the down side, laminate seams and edges are usually visible. Additionally, laminate countertops don't generate as much resale value to the home as you can expect from other materials. Plus, the material can chip and scratch. These damaged areas can be difficult to repair because the laminate filler usually doesn't match the color of the original material. However, Kampel makes an interesting repair product called SeamFil, which can be custom color-matched to the laminate countertop (www.kampelent.com).

Vetrazzo, Inc., offers colorful countertops manufactured from 85 percent recycled glass. (Photos by Joel Puliatti)

WOOD

For a warm, natural touch to the décor, it's hard to beat wood or butcher block countertops. Typically made of hardwood such as oak or maple, wooden countertops are available in several tones and finishes. Wood countertops are easy to clean, and they can be sanded and refinished to renew the look. They're comparatively inexpensive at $30 to $65 per square foot, installed. Plus, it's easy to install a wood countertop, which are sold as slabs, or can even be custom-cut and glued-up into butcher block by a DIY carpenter.

However, these countertops also have the same pitfalls of wood. Wood can stain and be damaged by water over time. Wood countertops also must be sealed to keep debris and bacteria out of the wood grain.

STAINLESS STEEL

Often used in commercial kitchens because it repels heat and stains as well as resists rust, a stainless steel countertop provides a contemporary and industrial look. Stailess steel is easy to clean, and the countertop is built to your specification, complete with an integrated sink for a seamless appearance.

Shetkastone is an environmentally friendly material manufactured primarily from recycled paper. Shown are three samples, including "Counterfit Green—Shredded," which appears to be made from shredded money.

As far as cons, stainless steel countertops are very expensive and require professional installation, running about $100 to $150 per square foot, installed. Stainless steel is also prone to scratches and dents, and can easily show fingerprints.

CONCRETE

Concrete countertops are one of the fastest growing segments of the countertop industry. They can be constructed in unusual shapes, textured, etched and stained in artistic colors or patterns. Concrete countertops are usually cast in place inside the kitchen. Although, the high price of professional installation may be an obstacle for some ($80 to $120 per square foot, installed), the do-it-yourself approach can save a great deal of money. Construction requires creating forms, mixing and dyeing your own concrete mix, and troweling the surface to a glassy finish. There are several how-to books and articles on the subject, and companies such as Quikrete now offer a Countertop Mix, which is a flowable, high-strength concrete mix specially formulated for precast and cast-in-place concrete countertop applications. Concrete resists heat and scratches, and new treatments and finishes can reduce porosity and help prevent cracking.

On the downside (aside from the installation cost), cracks can develop in a concrete countertop, but this can usually be minimized with skillful installation and the proper sealing techniques.

RECYCLED GLASS

For the green-minded remodeler, Vetrazzo, Inc. manufactures countertops made from 85-percent recycled glass. The largest proportion of glass comes from curbside recycling programs, while other glass comes from post industrial usage, windows, dinnerware, stemware, automotive windshields, stained glass, laboratory glass, reclaimed glass from building demolition, and other unusual sources such as decommissioned traffic lights. Available in dozens of striking colors and designs, recycled glass countertops are smooth, just like highly polished granite, and they're comparable in strength, scratch resistance, thermal resistance, durability, and care and maintenance to granite. However, Vetrazzo panels must be fabricated to your specific dimensions before installation, and the company does not sell directly to homeowners. This means you can expect a high installation and material cost, much like granite.

RECYCLED PAPER

Another environmentally friendly material is Shetkastone, an innovative countertop material engineered with interlocking fibers from recycled wastepaper, cardboard and cloth to create a beautiful, durable surface that is non-toxic and has no off-gassing. Shetkastone machines like wood and is a scratch-resistant, stain-resistant, water-resistant, and class "A" fire-rated product. Similar to solid surface materials, the colors are the same all the way through, so it can be refinished to its original appearance in the unusual case of any surface damage. Shetkastone is available in a growing variety of colors and styles. The countertops are shipped finished and ready to install, and the price falls between solid surface materials and granite. In other words, it's a very nice, unique material, but also expensive. **EHT**

Brand New Tune

A Magnaflow Performance Turbo-Back System Adds Quiet Horsepower

By Larry Walton

When my brother Chad started complaining about how loud the exhaust was on his 2002 F-350 Super Duty I thought, geez man, are you getting old or what?

"No, really," he told me, "you can't even hear yourself think."

We crawled under the truck and had one of those "what-the-hey" moments, which is like an "aha" moment except it happens under a truck while looking at what some crazy Canucks (this pickup was originally sold in Canada) had done to an exhaust—which should make it what-the-hey, eh?

What we found was a modified exhaust where someone simply cut out the muffler and the mandrel bends that carry the exhaust over the rear axle. They got real fancy and welded a curved tip to point the exhaust down at the road.

So, his truck was running a no-muffler straight pipe that didn't even extend to the rear of the vehicle. This was loud for the neighbors, but worse for the occupants of the cab. Additionally, this exhaust was not tuned for performance of any type.

"Uh oh, time to go Magnaflow," I said, cause I'm fly like that, bustin' rhymes under a truck in my bro's driveway.

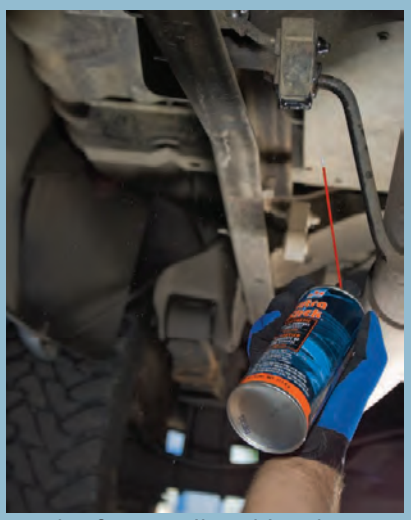
We ordered a 4-inch turbo-back system with a 3-1/2-inch downpipe, which according to the Magnaflow guys produces just the right amount of back pressure. Dyno testing of this exhaust on the 2002 7.3-liter PowerStroke indicates gains of 12 horsepower and 38 foot-pounds of torque. If he can keep his foot off the throttle, Chad should also see slight gains in fuel mileage.

Once installed, the exhaust system sounded great. Magnaflow was able to eliminate almost all of the higher pitched whistles from the turbo spooling up, so what you get is a nice deep resonance. Inside the cab, things are much, much quieter.

STEP-BY-STEP

To install the exhaust system we removed the original, laid out the Magnaflow system, installed everything loose from turbo to tip, and checked and tightened the connections. Here's a closer look at how we got it done:

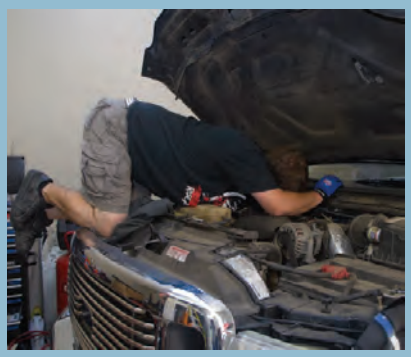
We hit the hangers where they go through the insulators with some Ultra Slick, which made removal much easier. A good grip



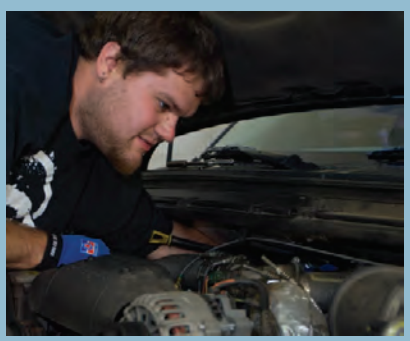
on the frame rail and insulator with one hand, along with a steady pull on the other, separates the hanger from the insulator.

My son, Tim, found a flange-type connection just behind the transmission cross-member. He took the nuts off and was able to disconnect the exhaust at that point.

Next it was time to go up into the engine bay where Tim found himself in a much different position than he's used to when working on imports.

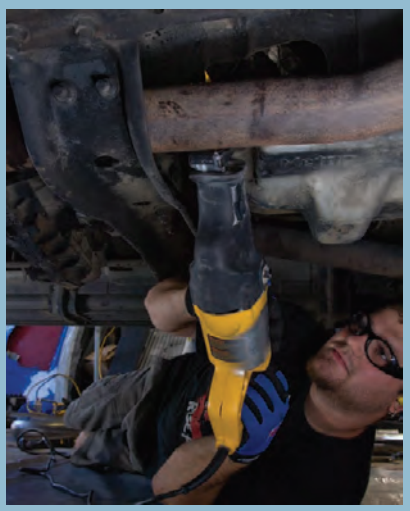


Getting to the V-clamp that holds the downpipe to the turbo requires going by feel as much as by sight. It took some time to



find the right combination of socket extensions, but we got the V-clamp loose and the downpipe separated from the turbo.

We used a reciprocating saw



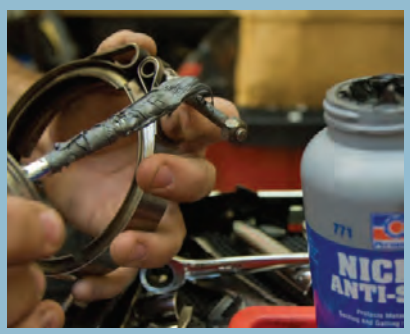
with a metal cutting blade to cut off the OEM downpipe just in front of the tranny crossmember. Keeping the shoe of the saw against the pipe while cutting helped minimize movement in the pipe. Tim broke off the last

STEP-BY-STEP

little bit of metal so he could have good grip on both halves of the pipe.

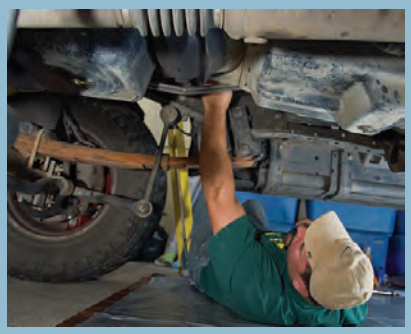
We took care to bring the original downpipe down through the opening between the engine and firewall without damaging any vehicle or human body parts.

Tim applied some Anti-Seize to the threads of the V-clamp before putting it back into position on the turbo. This product



by Permatex is rated for up to 2,400 degrees F.

Chad got the upper downpipe of the Magnaflow system ready to install from below, while Tim got into position in the engine bay. Chad then supported the downpipe from below and followed Tim's instructions from the turbo.



With the V-clamp parked on the turbo, the guys worked together to line up the flange of the downpipe with the turbo opening.

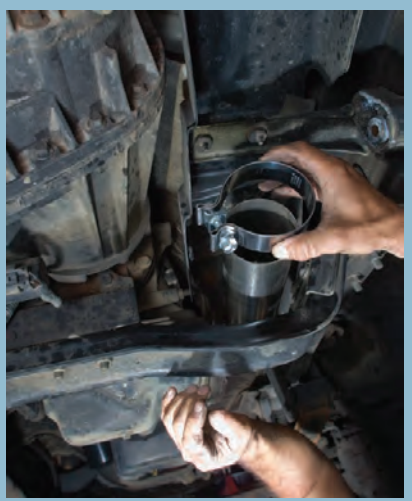
Tim moved the V-clamp into a position where he could see that the downpipe and turbo were properly aligned. He then rolled

the V-clamp up so the nut was facing toward the front of the vehicle, making it accessible to a socket and extension.

With the V-clamp tightened enough to keep the downpipe against the turbo but loose

enough to be rotated, the guys moved on to the upper-downpipe-to-lower-downpipe connection. At

each connection, they slid on a clamp so it could be positioned for tightening once the downstream pipe is in place.



We tried to guess which position was best for the 4-inch mid-pipe hanger and slid it on. Later there was some debate, but it wasn't hard to take it apart and flip it around to try different orientations.

We found that it was easier to put the insulators on the exhaust system hangers first and then onto the vehicle posts.

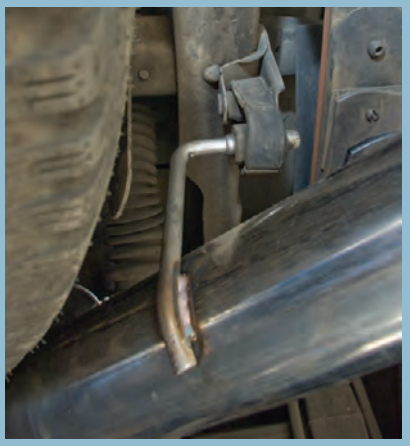
We also preassembled the adjustable T-clamp, which came with the kit, and put it in position before lifting the muffler into place.

Chad positioned the muffler while Tim clamped it into place. He then snaked the tailpipe over the rear axle and past the spare tire.

Holding the exhaust-tip section in position helped determine the attitude of the tailpipe.

It took some Ultra Slick and a little persuasion to get the tip hanger into the insulator between the spare tire and the leaf springs.

Chad held the exhaust tip in position to clear the rear fender while Tim clamped the tip section to the tail pipe. The attitude of the mandrel bends in the tail pipe, as well as a how the tail



pipe and tip section are rotated, determine the clearance over the rear dif, around the shock, away from the spare tire and below the fender before it can be clamped.

With all of the components in place, we inspected the entire

length of the system to make sure the clearances and pipe overlaps all looked good before tightening. To get some of the connections tight enough, we backed the nut off and got a run at it with an impact driver. **EHT**

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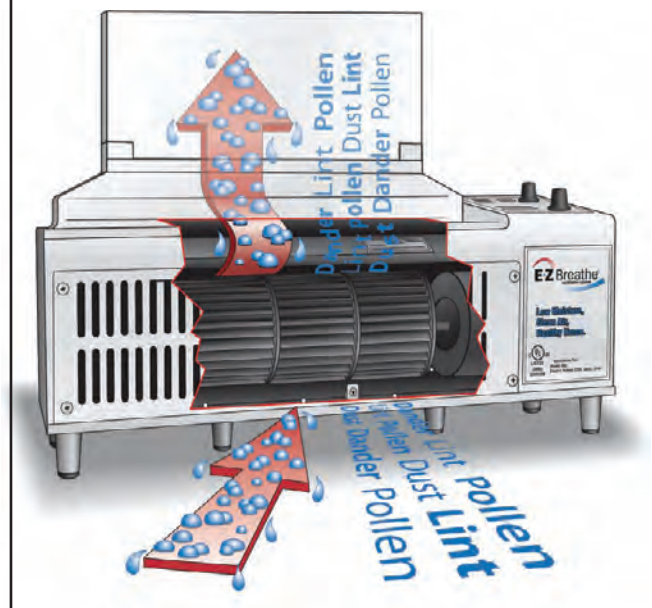
Graphite Extreme is an ultra-thin, high-performance graphite-based lubricant that can be used in extreme temperatures from -99 to 986 degrees F. Especially useful in dusty, dirty conditions where greaseless, oil-free lubrication is required, it will not pick up dust, dirt or grime. Use it for maintenance on locks, lawnmowers, snow-blowers, pumps, sliding mechanisms, bicycle chains, conveyor chains and more. For engine-related uses Graphite Extreme is great for gears, springs, clutches and transmission cables. Graphite Extreme is also electrically conductive and is an excellent rust and freeze inhibitor. Visit www.jigaloo.com to find out more.

SELF ADHESIVE METAL TILES

Self Adhesive Metal Tiles from Interior 51 allow you to have the decorative stainless accents that are so popular today and at a fraction of the cost of stainless steel panels. With easy peel-and-stick installation, the adhesive backer lets you create backsplashes, accents or any decorative use you can imagine. Featuring durable, anodized aluminum construction, you'll be impressed by the high quality and look of these 4-inch square tiles. Available in brushed aluminum, satin aluminum and light stainless aluminum, each package contains 54 tiles, enough to cover 6 square feet. Turn alternating tiles 90 degrees to create a subtle checkerboard pattern, or purchase two different kinds of tile to create alternating patterns. These grout-free tiles can be cut-to-fit with household tools making them perfect for the DIY'er and professional alike. Each package includes installation directions and recommendations. For more information, visit www.interior51.com.

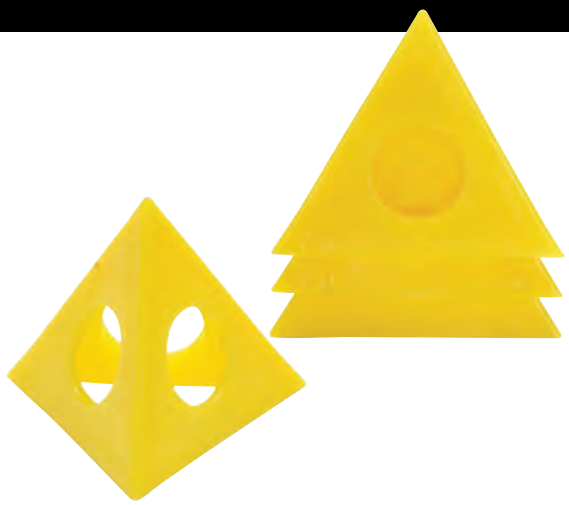
EZ BREATHE PROVIDES HEALTHIER AIR



As new building and remodeling practices strive for higher and higher energy efficiency they create a very tight structure that can harbor moisture, pollutants and toxins without a way to escape. The EZ Breathe unit provides that escape by expelling stale, polluted air and providing a whole-house air exchange six to 10 times each day. The EZ Breathe unit functions as a high-end dehumidifier and air purifier, while offering maintenance-free convenience at a lower operating cost. According to the manufacturer, a recent test showed an average mold spore decrease of 67 percent when using EZ Breathe. More impressively, the spore count in a specific location dropped from 1,240 spores per cubic meter to 267 spores per cubic meter, a 78-percent reduction in 45 days. A second test indicated an average 50-percent reduction in airborne particles throughout the entire structure and an impressive 95-percent reduction in mold spores in the area of concern. For more information, visit www.ezbreathe.com.

ERGONOMIC REDESIGN OF ZIRCON'S STUDSENSOR EDGE

Zircon's StudSensor EDGE is a new stud finder that finds wood or metal studs up to 3/4 inch deep behind drywall. A complete redesign of Zircon's most popular tool, the EDGE is modeled specifically to fit comfortably in the palm of the hand. Its new patent-pending, pinch grip provides a secure hold in either hand and at any angle, providing a new level of ease, comfort and utility to the user. There are also important new upgrades "under the hood." StudSensor EDGE features a newly redesigned SpotLite Pointer System and audio alert to clearly identify the stud edge. It also addresses the most common user error with its over-the-stud indicator that alerts users if scanning begins over a stud. For more information about Zircon's family of products, call 1-800-245-9265 or visit www.zircon.com.



PAINTER'S PYRAMID

The Painter's Pyramid is an innovative, new solution to a long-felt problem—waiting for paint to dry before completing a job. Specifically, the Painter's Pyramids are durable project supporters that allow you to paint an entire object (top, bottom and sides) in one session without waiting for it to dry or sacrificing quality. The small, plastic pyramids hold up to 200 pounds and can be secured on any work surface or sawhorses. The Painter's Pyramid is formulated from a plastic that will not stick to paint and has a rounded tip to ensure that the object being painted is not damaged. Use Painter's Pyramid for less mess and easier cleanup when painting doors, shutters, cabinets, shelves, furniture, moldings and much more. Reuse multiple times after cleanup and stack for easy storage. For more information, visit www.hydetools.com.

MAGIC-STUD-FINDER

The Magic-Stud-Finder, with its patented and powerful XtremeMagnets, accurately locates both wood and metal studs, with no batteries and no electronic parts, and absolutely no faulty readings even from pipes, cables and insulation. It locates stud screws and nails with pinpoint accuracy on the first reading every time, then automatically releases super strong, high-impact, plastic-encased magnets onto the wall, targeting the exact location of the stud, without having to make any markings on the wall. Simply load the magnets into the magnet holder, then move the holder from side to side, and up and down on the wall until a stud screw or nail is located. The XtremeMagnets are bright yellow so they clearly define where the screws or nails (and studs) are located. When the project is completed, the magnets are easily and quickly removed without leaving any marks or damage to the wall. For more information, visit www.magicstudfinder.com.

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Dean Johnson, host of TV's long-running home improvement show, *Hometime*

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